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That your petitioners, confiding in the wisdom and justice of this Right Honourable House, pray that their cause may be taken into consideration, and the relief granted to them for which they supplicate.

PROTEST,

Against the third reading of the Bill, entitled "A Bill to continue and amend an Act of the last Session of Parliament, for making more effectual Provision for preventing the current Gold Coin of the Realm from being paid or accepted for a greater value than the current Value of such Coin, for preventing any Note or Bill of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England from being received for any smaller Sum than the Sum therein specified, and for staying Proceedings upon any distress by tender of such Notes; and to extend the same to Ireland."

1. Because we feel it our duty to record our disapprobation of a Bill, which in effect must make the paper of the Banks of England and of Ireland a legal tender.

In America, in France, and in other countries, paper money has been thus substituted for coin; but in every instance, history informs us that this disgraceful practice was soon abandoned, from the experience of the ruinous consequences which almost immediately ensued.

We do, therefore, most anxiously deprecate the adoption of a measure, which in our opinion, will prove as hostile to the interests of individuals, as it must be injurious to the character, to the credit, and to the real welfare of this mercantile country.

2. Because the regulation of the current coin, which in every country is an act of Sovereign power, appears to us to be in effect transferred by this Bill, to the Directors of the Banks of England and of Ireland, who owe to the Proprietors of the Stock of their respective establishments, duties perfectly inconsistent with the due administration for the benefit of the public, of this royal prerogative, which is so incautiously conveyed to them.

We think ourselves therefore called upon, in the strongest manner, to censure the principle of a Bill by which this most important prerogative of the Crown, for the prudent and upright exercise of which, our Constitution requires that there should

be a responsible adviser—is placed in hands over whom Parliament has no controul, and who are alone responsible to their Constituents for the exercise of a judicious activity in abusing it.

3. Because this measure must enable the Bank of England, which has already acquired from the public an extraordinary profit of upwards of 18 millions, since the restriction of cash payments; and the Bank of Ireland, which, during that period, has been more than proportionably enriched, to levy contributions to an unlimited extent on the people of these kingdoms.

We cannot, therefore, without the utmost alarm, see the Constitution of this country violated by the rash transfer of the power of taxing the people from Parliament to the Directors of two Corporations, for the purpose of enabling them to add to the immoderate profits they have already acquired by the mismanagement of our Government; and we do most seriously lament, that recourse should be had to this rash, improvident, and unprecedented measure, when we reflect how universally and how severely the subjects of this country already feel those burdens, which, at this alarming crisis, the necessities of the State have induced their Representatives to impose upon them.

4. Because it appears to us to be the most important duty of the Legislature, in all criminal legislation, to define the Act it constitutes a crime, in terms as simple as they are clear, distinct and intelligible, so that none may err from mistake—that crime may be imputed to no one from misconception; and that the innocent may never be plausibly accused from motives of policy or malice.

We must, therefore, consider this Bill as disgraceful to the two Houses of Parliament—for to us it seems to enforce this unprecedented and ruinous measure by enactments, which empower the Government to institute vexatious prosecutions that must, from the terms of the enactment, prove abortive in all cases where the person accused has the means of conducting his defence—and which can alone be efficacious where fear leads the accused to decline a defence; or where poverty renders it impossible for him to undertake it.

(Signed) LAUDERDALE.
ROSSLYN.